

RECOMMENDED MERCURY SPILL CLEANUP PROCEDURE FOR FLUORESCENT LAMP BREAKAGE

Fluorescent lamps contain a small quantity of mercury that may pose a hazard to human health or the environment when improperly managed during a cleanup procedure. A single broken lamp has only a few milligrams of mercury and should not pose a serious health hazard if properly cleaned up.

Cleanup Procedure:

1. Secure the area around the breakage so the mercury powder is not tracked around to other areas. Cease activities and keep that area restricted until the entire lamp is cleaned up.
2. Turn off all fans and HVAC systems that could circulate mercury vapors or lamp powder to other areas. Open windows, if possible, to ventilate the area of the broken lamp.
3. Commercial mercury spill kits are available with all the necessary items needed to clean up the spill. The kits include the following items: mercury absorbent powder and sponges, mercury absorbent jars, safety glasses, heavy latex gloves, tweezers, plastic scraper and disposable bags. Follow manufacturer directions for use of the spill kit.
4. Use latex gloves while cleaning up mercury and broken lamps. Use care not to touch uncontaminated items with the gloves once the gloves have come into contact with the mercury.
5. Pick up any broken glass and place the pieces in a puncture resistant container. Tweezers may be required to safely pick up the broken glass.
6. The powder may be carefully swept up with a damp cloth or a small dustpan and brush.
7. Adhesive tape can also be used to pick up any remaining small pieces of glass and powder residue still located on the surface.
8. Carefully remove the gloves by turning them inside out to contain any powder on the surface of the gloves.
9. Place all broken glass, powder, tape and all clean up materials in a sturdy, sealed plastic or glass container.
10. Dispose of any contaminated cloths, fabric or footwear by placing them in a plastic bag for disposal. Seal all containers at this time. Store the containers in a safe place while awaiting disposal. Take a shower as soon as possible after the cleanup procedure.
11. Let the area air dry and when possible, thoroughly vent the spill area to the outside air.

If several fluorescent lamps break at once and cleanup is difficult, contact the NH Department of Environmental Services, Special Investigations Section at 271-3899.